6: Senfft--56
116, 535, 527

(no date) 1905

Woleaians
Woleai
Lamotrek

The festivities of the natives consist of banquets and dances. The dances are very beautiful; there is a great deal of variation in the patterns and both the composition and the presentation are perfect. Most of the dances are held in cool nights. The motions of the dance are accompanied by singing and by clapping the hands. There are no musical instruments.

28: Spiro--35-36 (1947-48) 1949 Woleaians
116, 476, 527 Ifalik

"There are a number of institutional, as well as non-institutional characteristics of these communal undertakings. All are completed with a feast, prepared by the women, at which the men sit about in small groups by the structure on which they had been working. Furthermore, when the men assemble for their work, they bring coconuts which are deposited in a common store, it becoming the sole function of certain [36] of the men to husk them. At the completion of the work, the chiefs distribute the coconuts among the men who receive them with great pleasure. This distribution of food, at other times of tobacco at communal gatherings raises a perplexing problem: Why should coconuts or tobacco, which all people possess in abundance, be distributed by the chiefs at the completion of these affairs, and why should a handful of tobacco or 4 coconuts be received with such obvious pleasure by the people, particularly when as in this case, they bring the coconuts themselves, and they are now merely being redistributed? We shall have occasion to discuss this point in some detail in our chapter on psychology."

28: Spiro--42 (1947-48) 1949 Woleaians
116, 462, 252, 527 Ifalik

"The women's economic activities have been enumerated above, and need little technical explanation. The cooking is done in the cook-sheds, usually a number of women in the household working together. In the preparation of food for feasts two and three households may cooperate. Most cooking is performed over the open fire; the um, the underground stone oven distributed universally thoughout Oceania, being used only on the occasion of feasts."

41: Bates & Abbott N-5 (1953) 1958
OR21 Woleai OR21
Ifaluk



the flies, and during the evening, to get away from the mosquitoes, Ted stuck to the Fan Nap for writing up his notes—but carefully protected with long trousers tied around the ankles, and with coils of Japanese "punk" burning to exorcise the mosquitoes. He had great faith in that burning punk.

We decided to start the plant collecting that afternoon, since the drying cabinet was ready. It was quite an expedition—Yani, Tony, Bakal, Don and me. The idea was to try to collect not only the plants, but information about them. Tony, as a Ulithi man, didn't know the local plant lore, but he was a good interpreter. Yani's English was rapidly gaining in fluency, however, and he and Don, particularly, were able to understand one another almost from the beginning without outside help. Yani did know the local plants—their names and their uses—and Don would jot down this information while I fussed with the plant press itself. Bakal, as usual, was general handy man.

The clean-up was continued next morning and pretty well finished by noon, when everyone on Falarik gathered on the lawn outside the Fan Nap for a communal meal. "Feast" is probably too strong a word for the meals that invariably followed any community activity. The food was lavish enough, contributed by all of the participating households, but it did not differ markedly from the everyday diet.

In this instance, Ted decided that the occasion was important enough for him to contribute one of the cases of corned beef that he had brought along for just such purposes. The canned beef was a greatly appreciated delicacy, called "carawao," which would seem to stem from the Spanish word for water-buffalo, carabao. Several Ifalukian words reflected Spain's dominance in the Carolines in the 19th century —the word "cat" for instance, which hardly differed from the Spanish gato.

The opened case of beef was put before Maroligar, the number two chief, but the distribution of the cans was carried out by Toroman, the number three chief, who always seemed to take over when there was anything to be divided among the island households. He called out the names of the households, tossing the cans to representatives of each; some cans were set aside for Falalap (which was having its own clean-up), and there was a small, separate pile for the chiefs.

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The people had brought many pots of breadfruit, cooked in different ways, and there was a large pile of drinking coconuts—also divided by Toroman. The meal lasted about an hour. I spent most of the time prowling around with the cameras while Ted and Don were more directly participating, squatting with the chiefly group. Ted reported that he liked best breadfruit that had been cooked with coconut cream, resulting in a sort of mashed dough with the white, creamy, semi-sweet sauce.

That evening Don had his regular session of English and Ifaluk language exchange under the gasoline lanterns in the back of the Fan Nap. After the lesson Yani and his friend Tachiwelimeng lingered. They asked about the war between the United States and Japan, and got to telling about their own experiences. Tachiwelimeng had been taken by the Japanese to Fais, where there was a radio station. When the first American ship appeared off the island the Japanese got very excited, radioed the news to Yap, and then disappeared into hiding. The bombardment that followed scared everybody on the island. Tachiwelimeng spoke no English, but he was a born clown and gave a hilariously vivid pantomime of how the noise of the first shell tumbled him, how he crept behind a coconut palm and crouched in a ball, how a shell hit the coconut tree about six feet overhead and blew it down. No one was hurt except one of the Japanese, who was hit in the arm, but not seriously.

Japanese ships later took their captive labor to Yap, to use in filling holes in the landing strip made by the regular American bombings. Tachiwelimeng gave another graphic pantomime of American planes dodging Japanese ack-ack, bombs exploding all over the place and the like. These people seemed to look back on this as a big sideshow, bearing no resentment for the local people killed by the American bombings of Yap, and little resentment against the Japanese for getting them involved there.

The days were beginning to go by with remarkable speed. Ted gravely crossed them off, one by one, on a big calendar posted in the Fan Nap, and there was a check on this in my notebook, where the meteorological observations were entered every morning, first thing

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796 [126] story. This went on for nearly an hour, with the three of us too busy with cameras and recording machine to really appreciate what was going on. Then there was an intermission. Arueligar, the high priest, distributed the two cases of corned beef and the two cartons of cigarettes we had donated for the occasion. Dancers and onlookers refreshed themselves by drinking coconuts. Then the dance was resumed, this time by the women, who formed their line along the west margin of the clearing. Their dress was similar to that of the men, except that of course they wore lava-lavas, not loin-cloths, under their coconut-leaf skirts.

796 178 533 Ted was interested to discover that two of the dances performed by the women were new—a concrete demonstration that the traditional form of the ur dance does not necessarily impose traditional subjects. One of the new dances, turning on a poem composed by Letaweriur, Yani's wife, concerned the first coming of the Americans to the island. It was a very long chant, recounting in detail the appearance of the first ship, the delivery of an official document, the nature of America and the Americans, and the like. Ted's translation of the opening stanza is:

*Now all our women rejoice;*
*Now the Americans have come.*
*This is pleasing to the chiefs.*
[539] *They have given us a paper.*
*This place is to rise;*
*This island is to be lifted up.*
*The chiefs say we are to dance.*
*We will dance, we will rejoice!*
*This very month, for this is a good year!* Eil
*The Japanese are gone.*
*We did not like their rough ways.*
*The gods have been good to us;*
*Now our crops are safe.*
*The Americans talk kindly. . . .*

529 123 262 When the women's dance was over, the people scattered into small groups—made up by family, by household, or by friendship—for the feast. Perhaps "feast" is too strong a word, since there was nothing

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unusual about the food except our corned beef. But always, after a communal activity of any kind, there was a communal meal. I drifted from group to group taking pictures and eating a snack of breadfruit with this friend, a hunk of taro with that, and letting them play the always-amusing game of peering at one another through the sights of my Graphic camera.

The day was shot as far as "work" for us was concerned. By the time we had got film and notes taken care of, we were ready for our afternoon swim in the lagoon in front of the Fan Nap.

From the beginning, we had formed a habit of going for a swim in the lagoon toward the end of the afternoon. Many people on Ifaluk bathed in the lagoon in late afternoon, so we were right in line with local custom. As an old Floridian, I really preferred swimming in the bright sun of mid-day and I tried to make our lagoon schedule as early in the afternoon as I could; but what with one thing or another, we often didn't get into the water until rather late.

We always wore goggles. I wonder now why anyone ever goes swimming without goggles. Man, under water, is blind without them. In many places, to be sure, there is little to see; but one can never be sure of this without trying. And in the lagoon at Ifaluk there were unending marvels to be looked at.

We were caught at first by the sheer pleasure of drifting around, exclaiming at the forms of the corals and of the colors of the fish. Then we got to thinking that if we were to spend an hour or so in the water every afternoon, we might as well be trying to make some systematic observations.

The fish, we noticed, paid very little attention to us. Apparently a large brown object of human shape plopped into their environment had no connotation of danger. The fish went on about their business as usual, indifferent to the observer. The contrast with the land, where birds and mammals clearly regard observing man as a potential enemy, was great. We didn't have to resort to field glasses or blinds—we could just float pleasantly on the surface and watch the fish. In coral seas, at least, fish watching seems to me to have it all over bird watching, though I doubt whether I would be so enthusiastic about fish watching in colder waters.